

WEST BRIDGFORD  
Urban District Council.



Annual Report

OF THE  
Medical Officer of Health,  
FOR THE YEAR 1900.



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WEST BRIDGFORD  
Urban District Council,  
1900.

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*Vice-Chairman* .. Mr. WILLIAM ARTHUR ABBOTT.

Messrs.

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<i>Medical Officer of Health</i>	..		WALTER HUNTER, M.D.
<i>Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector</i>			WILLIAM PARE, C.E.
<i>Rate Collector</i>	..	..	THOS. C. GRAY
<i>Treasurer</i>	..	..	HENRY RUSSELL



# REPORT

OF THE

## MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1900.

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MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have now the pleasure of presenting to you my Tenth Annual Report which deals with the year 1900. I hope from a statistical and public health point of view it will commend itself to your Council.

In a comparatively new and rapidly growing district like West Bridgford, recently endowed with Urban powers, there is always a great amount of interesting work to be done, and to this work your Council has now for several years very earnestly devoted itself.

The supervision of new buildings, the making of new roads, the drainage of the district and the disposal of sewage, the water supply and the lighting, are all important, but these form a part only, of the multifarious duties which come up for your consideration.

The Parish continues to grow, and since my last Annual Report several new streets have been laid out and are being built upon.

In my last Report I referred to the importance of having the plumbing work of all new buildings supervised, and suggested that there should be an examination and registration of all Operative Plumbers. The movement has now taken practical shape, and a system of instruction, examination, and registration

of plumbers has been organised all over the country—a step which has the approval of medical, sanitary, and municipal authorities.

From a statistical point of view, this Report, like its predecessors, shows a very low death-rate, while the birth-rate as usual keeps very low.

At the close of the year, and during the first two days of the present year, owing to a very heavy rainfall, your Parish suffered severely from a flood. Much damage was done, and the residents, especially those living on Loughborough and Melton Roads, underwent great personal inconvenience. I am not aware, however, that much if any, subsequent sickness, resulted from the water. Your Council, always alive to the best interests of the Parish, have appointed a Committee to consider the question of floods and their prevention, and it is to be hoped that this Committee may be able to devise some means at arriving at the causes and the prevention of any similar occurrence.

### **SEWAGE DISPOSAL.**

The installation for the bacteriological treatment of West Bridgford Sewage is now practically complete, and the works are now in operation. The delay which has been somewhat aggravating, has been due to the difficulty in getting the gearing machinery delivered and fixed. Meantime it is satisfactory to know that this system of sewage disposal continues to give satisfactory results.

As I showed in my last year's Report, the removal of the solid particles from the sewage, by the action of bacteria, is not attended with the production of a similar weight of sludge in the beds. The solid particles are converted by bacterial action into inodorous and non-putrefactive liquids and gases. It does not remain behind as sludge in the beds. If the beds are worked too long at a stretch, there may be sludge, but after a short period of rest it is digested and converted into inorganic



substances in solution. There is **no** smell of sewage in the beds. If the filling material in the bed is dug up it smells of fresh earth, or garden mould. I may here summarise the changes which the sewage undergoes in the bacterial beds, as judged by the naked eye appearances of the effluent:—

- (1) It has changed into a clear fluid, in many cases like ordinary water.
- (2) Its odour has entirely or almost entirely disappeared.
- (3) Chemically it has been changed from a foul smelling organic state to a form of inoffensive, inorganic salts in solution.
- (4) The number of bacteria has **been** greatly reduced.
- (5) Fish will live in globes filled with the effluent.

Your Council must not be disappointed if the *immediate* results are not quite satisfactory. It takes days or weeks before the bacteria in the tank are present in sufficient numbers to put the tank in full working order, while a new bacterial bed produces unsatisfactory results until the material of which it is composed (broken-clinker) has become coated with a slime of animal and vegetable matter, and of course innumerable bacteria.

When a bed has reached this stage it is said to be “matured” or “charged” with the special bacteria concerned in the work of purification.

Sanitary Authorities are anxiously looking to the bacterial treatment of sewage as an inexpensive way out of their difficulties.

It must be admitted, however, that as far as our present knowledge, based on careful experiments, goes, the bacteria of typhoid fever, cholera, or other water-borne disease, may still exist and flourish in the clear effluent which leaves the filter bed. Probably no bacterial process at present in operation detains the sewage for a sufficiently long time to allow of the complete destruction of all disease producing germs by bacterial agency.

This need not, however, cause any alarm in West Bridgford,

because the effluent from the filter beds will undergo a further filtration through land before reaching the water courses, and this will very materially, if not absolutely, prevent any danger which might otherwise arise.

### ROADS.

During the year quite a number of private street works was completed. These include Colwick Road, Hound Road, Fox Road, Stratford Road, Millicent Road, Epperstone Road, George Road, and Rushworth Avenue, including Bridge Grove. The total cost was £2,234, which has been apportioned to the various property owners in these Streets.

Trees have been planted on each side of these Roads, with the exception of Stratford Road and Rushworth Avenue.

The number of trees in the district at the present time are as follows :—

Musters Road	..	..	132 trees.
George Road	..	..	33 „
Patrick Road	..	..	35 „
Millicent Road	..	..	34 „
Henry Road	..	..	57 „
Epperstone Road	..	..	19 „
William Road	..	..	21 „
Hound Road	..	..	15 „
Fox Road	..	..	21 „
Colwick Road	..	..	18 „
Bridgford Road	..	..	49 „
Trent Boulevard	..	..	99 „
Adbolton Grove	..	..	25 „
Melton Grove	..	..	12 „
Junction of Melton and Loughborough			
Roads	..	..	9 „
			<hr/>
			579
			<hr/>



These trees add greatly to the beauty of the district, and favor its residential character. They are trimmed every year. May I suggest that the private trees in some of the gardens, fronting the streets, should be similarly trimmed and not allowed, as some of them are, to grow too large, and so overhang the public footpaths.

On 1st January, the New Lady Bay Bridge was publicly opened in the presence of the Members of your Council, and a large number of parishioners. I had the honour to be the first one to drive over it. The approach to the Bridge on either side has been greatly improved. The gradients are perhaps too steep, but this was unavoidable, as your Council had not an entirely free hand in fixing these. The old cottage on the Bridge has been acquired by your Council, and this old landmark will very shortly disappear. The Bridge is of sufficient strength to take any ordinary locomotive or other traffic.

### **WATER SUPPLY.**

Nearly 1000 yards of water mains were laid down during the year, as follows:—417 yards on Bridgford Lane to supply the new district opening up there; 150 yards at the extreme end of Melton Road; 139 yards on the Radcliffe Road, beyond the Lady Bay Bridge, while the erection of the New Lady Bay Bridge necessitated the laying of 249 yards of 6 inch mains to meet the demands of the Lady Bay Estate. These pipes were carried over the Bridge instead of under the Canal as formerly.

The main which conveys the water from Trent Bridge to the Lady Bay Bridge is only 3 inches in diameter. This, it is feared, is too small for its requirements, especially in the summer time. It is under the consideration of the Nottingham Corporation to replace this by a 6 inch main, which would be sufficient to maintain an adequate supply to the Lady Bay Estate all the year.

The only fatal case of enteric fever during the year occurred in the only house in the Parish which got its water supply from

a well. On examination the water was found to be so highly contaminated with organic matter as to be quite unfit for use. The well was immediately closed, and the house supplied with Corporation water. As far as I know, every house in your Parish has now an abundant supply of good water.

### **SCAVENGING.**

In October last a fresh contractor was again appointed for scavenging the Parish, making the fourth contractor in five years. I am therefore again unable to give you a record of the work done. The important duty of scavenging the district will never be properly done until your Council undertakes the work itself. Contractors can only do this work for the sake of profit, efficiency must always be therefore a secondary consideration.

At the close of the year there were 1109 houses having combined privies and ashpits. These are emptied by the contractor on receipt of notice from the tenants. At the same time there were 440 houses having dry ashbins, which are supposed to be cleansed weekly. All new houses are now provided with these, therefore the number of ashpits given above will not be increased, and your Council should give every encouragement to get those in existence abandoned as quickly as possible. The regular and speedy removal of the contents of the ashpits, &c., is a matter which affects the public health very closely. The difficulty which your Council has now to face is how to get rid of the refuse, and this difficulty has of late become extreme. The neighbouring farmers now refuse to have it put on the land. The solution must be found in its destruction by fire. Your Health Committee has of late been very earnestly considering the question of building a destructor at the Sewage Farm for this purpose. I had hoped to enter fully into this question in this Report, but as the subject is still being considered by your Health Committee, it would be premature to do so. It is to be hoped that no obstacle will be put in the way of your Council

proceeding with the erection of a Destructor and Disinfecting Chamber at once. There is no alternative scheme which would be satisfactory to the Parish. The destruction of all dry refuse by incineration would be an appropriate corollary to the destruction of liquid refuse by bacteria, whilst the disinfecting apparatus would be a considerable saving in expenditure, and the necessity of depending upon another sanitary authority for the important work would be obviated. With those two systems,—the most modern and most scientific yet known—of sewage and refuse disposal, your Parish would be ahead of any other Urban District in the kingdom.

A secondary advantage, but nevertheless a great one, of a Destructor, would be the utilization of its heat for driving the engines at the pumping station. This would very materially reduce your coal bill and in time enable you to dispense with coal altogether. With coal at its present price this is an advantage worth serious consideration.

### SEWERS.

The Sewers were flushed regularly as usual. Some of these—especially those laid early in the history of West Bridgford—are in a very leaky condition. This necessitates continuous pumping at certain times of the year. This is a serious thing, as it means an unnecessary consumption of coal. Last month (January) the coal bill amounted to £23. The amount of sewage to be pumped is also increasing, and your Council must be prepared to face an expenditure of £150 at least annually for coal. There were no additional ventilating shafts erected during the year, but arrangements are in progress for fixing 5 new shafts—2 on Trent Boulevard, 1 on Rutland Road, 1 on Seymour Road, and 1 on Holme Lane.

### POPULATION.

According to the Rate Book there were 1,444 houses occupied at Midsummer last. Reckoning  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inhabitants to each



house this would give population at this time of 6,859. It is on these figures that I base my vital statistics. The coming census will shew whether this is a fairly accurate estimate. As shewing the steady development of your parish I give you the following table for the past years :—

		Houses occupied.	Population estimated.	Increase.
Midsummer	1896	965	4,584	
	1897	1,100	5,225	641
	1898	1,216	5,776	551
	1899	1,318	6,260	484
	1900	1,444	6,859	599

It will be seen from this table that there is no decline in the population. The rate of increase in the population was greater in the 1899-1900 period than the two previous years, and was actually greater than at any previous time in the history of the parish, with the exception of the 1896-7 period.

The number of houses at present in course of erection is 66, as compared with 85 in course of erection at this time last year, so that building operations are not quite so brisk as they were a year ago. Of the 66 houses at present being built, 18 are on the Lady Bay Estate.

The increase of population of West Bridgford goes to prove this fact, that while the purely rural populations of the country are slowly decreasing, the Urban populations are rapidly increasing. The great attention devoted to Urban Sanitation has given the dwellers in towns and their suburbs many advantages not enjoyed by those who remain in the country. Efficient drainage, a wholesome supply of pure water, better facilities for education, rapid means of transit and locomotion may be mentioned as being not the least of those advantages which draw people from the country into the cities and their suburbs. The growth of manufacturing centres, with the influx of rural labourers into towns, and the consequent neglect of purely agricultural pursuits,

will not, however, conduce to increased health or longevity, and the result will sooner or later be deplored ; and how to bring people “back to the land” will soon become one of the greatest problems of the age.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

(1) BIRTHS.—130 children were born during the year as compared with 126 births during the preceding year. There were 61 males and 69 females. The birth-rate is 18.8 per 1000, which is much too low. The rate for Nottingham was 27.3 per 1000, and for all England 21.9 per 1000. The birth-rate of West Bridgford, like the birth-rate of the whole country, is unsatisfactory and abnormal. Compared with other European nations (France excepted) there is a marked decline in the birth-rate of England, especially during the last twenty-five years. Two signs of a prosperous nation are a high birth-rate and a low death-rate. In spite of a falling birth-rate, the population of this country keeps increasing, and this is due chiefly to the decline in the death-rate. With a low death-rate and a high birth-rate the prosperity of a country is assured, but a continued or progressive low birth-rate constitutes a menace to its future welfare. West Bridgford is notorious for its abnormally low birth-rate.

I give you the following birth-rates for comparison :—

West Bridgford	..	18.8	per 1,000.
Beeston	..	23.8	„
Carlton	..	26.6	„
Arnold	..	31.4	„
Nottingham	..	27.3	„
England and Wales	..	28.9	„

(2) DEATHS.—There were 60 deaths registered during the year—31 males and 29 females, as compared with 53 deaths during 1899. Of the total deaths

17 died during the 1st quarter.

20 „ „ 2nd „

11 „ „ 3rd „

12 „ „ 4th „

Of the total deaths, 6 died before completing the first year of life—of those who survived the first year, 18 died before reaching the age of 50, 10 died between 50 and 60, 10 between 60 and 70, 15 between 70 and 80, and 1 over 80. Of the total deaths, no fewer than 16 died over 70 years of age, shewing that a large percentage of the deaths in your parish occur in people of advanced life.

Of the infants, 1 died of convulsions, 1 of marasmus, 1 of broncho-pneumonia, and 2 of premature birth. There were no deaths attributed to diarrhœa, probably due to the absence of great heat during the summer and autumn months.

Of the adults, 6 died of consumption, 5 of diseases of the respiratory organs, other than consumption, 10 died of heart disease, 7 of cancer, and 2 deaths were registered as the result of influenza. There were 3 fatal cases of scarlet fever, 1 of diphtheria, and 1 of typhoid fever. There were 3 uncertified deaths and 1 suicide. One inquest was held.

The death-rate is 8·7 per 1000 as compared with 8·5 per 1000 for 1899. The rate keeps exceedingly low. The death-rate for Nottingham was 19·1 per 1000, and for all England 18·3 per 1000.

I give you the following death-rates for comparison :—

West Bridgford	..	8·7	per 1000.
Beeston	..	9·7	„
Carlton	..	11·7	„
Arnold	..	15·1	„
Nottingham	..	19·1	„
England and Wales	..	18·3	„

INFANT MORTALITY.—The deaths under one year of life per 1000 births during 1900 were only 46. This is a phenomenally



low rate of infant mortality. The rate for Nottingham was 186 per 1000.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year 50 cases of infectious diseases were reported to me—of these there were 38 cases of scarlet fever, 9 of typhoid fever, and 3 of diphtheria. For 1899 the total number of infectious diseases was 66.

SCARLET FEVER.—The number of cases was fewer than last year when the disease was very prevalent. There were three fatal cases, two of these occurred in one family and were of an especially malignant type—death occurring within three days. Two cases were removed to the Basford Sanatorium, the special circumstances attending these cases making their removal to hospital desirable.

Several cases occurred in November amongst the children attending a certain classroom in the Musters Road School. I examined the children in this room but found no one in an infectious condition.

One case occurred in the parish which was not notified to me. On making enquiry I found that the case had been diagnosed as scarlet fever, and attended to by the child's aunt, a young girl in her teens. This girl had, it appears, attended a lecture on infectious diseases, given to an evening class in one of the Nottingham Board Schools, and so considered herself competent to take charge of the case. One can easily see in this, a danger to the public health, and it is a question whether such lectures, where sufficient knowledge can only be given as to make its exercise a dangerous thing, are to be encouraged.

On the other hand, I would strongly urge that all children attending school should be taught some simple rules in hygiene, and especially the necessity of attention to the care, and preservation of the teeth. The regular brushing with soap and water, at least once a day, of their teeth, would form a most useful part of

every child's education. The amount of suffering and impaired health which arises from inattention to the child's mouth is deplorable, and might in this way be very readily obviated.

DIPHTHERIA.—There were only 3 cases during the year, as against 14 cases in 1899. One case proved fatal. The number of cases is too small for any reference to be drawn, but in places where this disease is prevalent, it has a distinct relation to school attendance---there is a decrease during the holiday season with an increase in the subsequent periods.

ENTERIC FEVER.—There were 9 cases during the year, as compared with 8 cases during the preceding year. There was one death. In cases of typhoid, the origin of the disease is obscure. Shell-fish, especially oysters, are a frequent cause. The early recognition of the disease, the thorough disinfection and early removal of the dejecta, the isolation of the patient and the employment of persons beyond middle life to attend upon the sick, are all needed to limit the spread of the disease.

To obviate as far as possible the danger arising from placing the dejecta from typhoid cases into the out-door closets and ashpits, I had some galvanized pails ordered for such cases. These receive the dejecta which are at once treated with deodorants, and removed frequently from the houses, by your sanitary staff. Where the house is provided with a w.c. this is not necessary. With one exception, all these nine cases occurred in houses which were not provided with water closets. This fact is in favour of the opinion now held by Medical Officers of Health, that where there is a water-carriage system of sewage disposal, typhoid fever is much less prevalent than where there are ashpits and privies. Every arrangement which tends to keep excremental or other filth, in or about houses is bad, and the good systems and arrangements are those, which expedite the removal of all such matters from close proximity to dwellings.

**PHTHISIS.**—There were six deaths during the year from consumption. This disease which still disables and kills a far greater proportion of our population than any other communicable disease, is of especial interest at present, owing to the praiseworthy attempts being made throughout the country, to establish Sanatoria for the Open-air Treatment of Consumption. Tuberculosis is a parasitic disease and it ought to be eradicated.

The disease is transmitted chiefly, by the sputum of a consumptive, to a previously healthy person, by tuberculous meat, or by milk from a tuberculous cow. These two latter causes are being rigorously dealt with by Medical Officers of Health and Municipal bodies, and may soon it is hoped disappear.

The first cause—the danger of one consumptive in a household infecting his fellows by his sputum, is a real danger which should be recognised by the public. The sputum should be received into a jar containing some absorbent material such as sawdust, and then burned.

The attention of Sanitary Authorities to the removal of those causes such as site, dwelling, occupation, overcrowding, etc., which promote the prevalence of the disease has already reduced such prevalence about 40 per cent. amongst males, and 54 per cent. amongst females. Combined with the early removal to well-appointed sanatoria, the prevalence of, and the mortality from consumption, should be still further greatly reduced.

The open-air treatment, so far as it has been tried, offers the best hope of curing consumption. The sanatorium about to be built for the county of Nottingham should therefore have the hearty support, financial and otherwise, of your Council.

In houses in West Bridgford where a death from consumption has occurred, it would be advisable if an offer were made to disinfect the rooms, free of charge.

## **NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES ACTS.**

This Act continues to work well, and has never given rise to



any friction between the notifier and myself. I have no reason to believe that there are any infectious cases which are not notified. Cases of infectious diseases affecting scholars are notified to the School Board. Absence from school by reason of the presence of infectious disease in the house, does not interfere with the absentees earning the Government Education Grant.

### CEMETERY.

No progress has been made in the direction of finding a new burial ground for the parish. The question is one of urgency, and must soon be considered seriously by your Council. The number of interments in the old parish burying ground during 1900 was 20, as compared with 26 during the preceding year.

### METEOROLOGY.

The year was an exceedingly wet one, rain falling on 215 days. March and September were the driest months. The 12th June and the 31st December were the wettest days. On the latter day the rainfall amounted to one and seven-tenths of an inch. February 12th was the coldest day, when the thermometer registered 13 degrees Fahrenheit. July 12th was the hottest day when the registered temperature was 84 degrees. The range of temperature during the year was 71 degrees.

In conclusion I beg to tender to the members of your Council my grateful thanks for many marks of kindness and courtesy shown to me; and to the officials, and especially to Mr. Pare, my obligations are due for much valuable assistance and help. I append the Local Government Tables.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

WALTER HUNTER, M.D.

TABLE I.

*Name of District, WEST BRIDGFORD (Nottinghamshire).***For Whole District.**

YEAR.	Popu- lation estimated to middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.		DEATHS AT ALL AGES. TOTAL.		DEATHS AT ALL AGES. NETT.	
		Numb'r	Rate*	Numb'r	Rate per 1,000 Births regis- tered.	Numb'r	Rate*	Numb'r	Rate*
1890									
1891									
1892									
1893									
1894	3515	91	25·9	12		38	10·8	38	10·8
1895	4061	88	21·2	3		32	7·8	32	1·8
1896	4584	93	20·8	9		41	8·9	41	8·9
1897	5225	128	24·5	10	78	43	8·2	43	8·2
1898	5776	101	17·5	14	138	52	9·	52	9·
1899	6260	126	20·1	11	87	53	8·5	53	8·5
Av'rages for years 1894- 1899.	4903	104	21·	10		43	9·	43	9·
1900	6859	130	18·8	6	46	60	8·7		

\* Rates calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

Area of District in  
acres (exclusive of  
area covered by water) } 1190

Total population at all ages.....6859  
Number of inhabited houses .....1444  
Average number of persons per house ....4 $\frac{3}{4}$

TABLE II.

*Name of District, WEST BRIDGFORD (Nottinghamshire).*

NAMES OF LOCALITIES.	WEST BRIDGFORD.			
	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.
YEAR.	<i>a.</i>	<i>b.</i>	<i>c.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1890....				
1891....				
1892....				
1893....				
1894....	3515	91	38	12
1895....	4061	88	32	3
1896....	4584	98	41	9
1897....	5225	128	43	10
1898....	5776	101	52	14
1899....	6260	126	53	11
Averages of Years 1894 to 1899 .. )	4903	104	43	10
1900....	6859	130	60	6



TABLE III.

*WEST BRIDGFORD URBAN DISTRICT.*

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the  
year 1900.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.					No. of Cases REMOVED TO HOSPITAL FROM EACH LOCALITY.
	At all ages.	At Ages—Years.				
		1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	
Small-pox . . . .						
Cholera . . . . .						
Diphtheria . . . .	3		3			
Membranous Croup..						
Erysipelas . . . . .						
Scarlet Fever ..	38	2	26	9	1	3
Typhus Fever ..						
Enteric Fever ..	9			3	6	
Relapsing Fever						
Continued Fever						
Puerperal Fever						
Plague . . . . .						
Totals . . . . .	50	2	29	12	7	3

TABLE IV.

*WEST BRIDGFORD URBAN DISTRICT.*

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during year 1900.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	DEATHS IN WHOLE DISTRICT AT SUBJOINED AGES.						
	All Ages.	Under 1.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and up- wards.
Small-pox .....							
Measles .....							
Scarlet fever .....	3		3				
Whooping-cough .....							
Diphtheria and mem- branous croup	1		1				
Croup .....							
Fever { Typhus .....	1					1	
Enteric .....							
Other continued..							
Epidemic influenza .....	2						2
Cholera .....							
Plague .....							
Diarrhoea .....	1						1
Enteritis .....	1		1				
Puerperal fever .....							
Erysipelas .....							
Other septic diseases ....							
Phthisis .....	6		1		2	3	
Other tubercular diseases							
Cancer, malignant disease	7					5	6
Bronchitis .....	2						2
Pneumonia .....	3	1				2	
Pleurisy .....							
Other diseases of respira- tory organs .....							
Alcoholism .....	2	2					
Cirrhosis of Liver }							
Venereal diseases .....							
Premature birth .....							
Diseases and accidents of parturition .....							
Heart diseases .....	10			1		6	3
Accidents .....							
Suicides .....	1					1	
All other causes .....	20						
All causes .....	60						